

CHAPTER I

I N T R O D U C T I O N

A. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Literature has long been regarded as a means to communicate with readers, either merely to entertain or to present a composition with various intentions. According to Edgar V. Roberts in his book Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing, whatever the form, all literature has much to offer, such as it helps us grow, personally and intellectually. He also views that literature "enables us to recognize human dreams and struggles in different places and times that we would never otherwise know." This is so because literature contains the record of peoples' values, their thoughts, their problems and conflicts --in short, their whole way of life. Thus by studying literature, added Roberts, we will be able to gain understanding and control towards events that occur around us and in the world at large since "it is one of the shaping influences of life and it helps to make us human" (1989 : 2).

It stands also upon children literature that various children stories are composed to give enlightenment towards young readers. It is true that education can be gained through literature as Graham Little asserted in his book An Approach to Literature :

"Whenever there is education, there is the study of literature. Men have always found it essential, from the most primitive stage of society to the most advanced, to teach their scripture, lore, and legend to their children (1966 : 1).

This teaching can also be found in Charles Kingsley's works, which mostly contain worthy values and messages concerning man and his life, one of which --the one to be analyzed in this paper-- is a fairy tale entitled The Water Babies. Within this didactic fantasy for children, Kingsley implies worth learning lessons in a framework easily understood by young readers, since the author uses simple language in telling his story and yet it is an enchanting reading. Thus the writer is interested in working on this novel considering Kingsley was truly consistent in his writings which were mostly the insights of life instead of merely commercial writings.

The Water Babies, said Naomi Wood in her essay "A (Sea) Green Victorian: Charles Kingsley and The Water Babies," tells a story of Tom, a degraded chimney sweep, who is transformed into a 'water baby'. In a magical, mystical version of evolution, Tom is 'born again' into a wonderful underwater world. Here he is given a second chance to develop into a man he should have been. After journeying through the natural wonders of stream, river, and ocean, Tom evolves into a true and strong man who is able to take.

an instrumental role in the land world as a 'great man of science who can plan railroads, and steam-engines, and electric telegraph, and rifled guns, and so forth (p.1).

Tom's adventure seems to have an important role in 'changing' him into a true man, a man who is able to signify his life, while at the first time he was a dirty, black boy --physically out of soot and mentally out of naughtiness. We can see here that elaboration of Tom's adventure constitutes the most effective way for Kingsley in delivering morals in the story. In that way he does not give merely doctrines, instead he brings children's fantasy into imagery world with all possible occurrences as they might experience it as well as in real world. In such a way, this teaching activity through a story will easily hit the sense since children will undergo themselves the consequences on each deed they develop.

It is true that the successfulness in delivering the idea of the story inevitably depends on the author's determination of how the story is built up. The choices of characters, setting, actions, statements, and other aspects in the story will have to be carefully formulated and maintained as to convey its meaning. It accords with Danziger's assertions in his book An Introduction to Literary Criticism: " Our discussion of literary works as structures has suggested that we want to focus attention first and foremost on the



poem, play, or story, and that we are interested primarily in how the manifold parts contribute to the total meaning" (1961 : 18).

Such a controlled elements can be seen in The Water Babies to embody its theme. All characters, actions, and statements are created in a way that they evoke the sense of goodness and badness all along characters' life. In this way children or readers will be able to catch the idea or theme of the story, beside other lessons of worth learning implied.

Now that The Water Babies figures prominent description on setting of both natural and manufactured, thus the writer would like to figure out its significance on contribution towards the theme or idea, together with morals to be found in the story. Hence there are two main problems to be answered in order to get evaluation and appreciation concerning values within a literary work, in this case the values on intrinsic elements of the novel. Literary criticism, said Little in his book An Approach to Literature, "is not mere fault-finding; it is the making of judgements and analyses, but might just as well consist entirely of admiration and praise. The purpose of criticism, in this sense, is to evaluate what has been said, how it has been said, and whether or not it was worth saying" (1966 : 7).

B. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS

Concerning the main topic of this thesis which discusses prominently on the setting and its significant contribution towards the theme and morals of the story, that is to reinforce those two aspects, these questions have been formulated to help the writer make a clear explanatory analysis.

1. How is the theme or idea of the story underscored through the setting control ?
2. How does the use of setting reveal morals of the story ?

C. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

In relation to the focus of analysis, this thesis aims to understand :

1. How the theme or idea of the story is underscored through the setting control
2. How the use of setting reveals morals of the story

D. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The writer surely hopes that this thesis can enrich the readers' literary knowledge in general, especially on the important essence of literary works. In relation to the topic, the writer tries to

describe the importance and significance of setting to correlate with the theme and morals of the story.

Hopefully this thesis might contribute to the students' rich appreciation on literary works as an input in working on the intrinsic elements of a novel, as to motivate them to be critical readers.

E. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The writer applies objective theory by Abrams since the analysis focuses mainly on the evaluation and appreciation within the novel.

To understand about the theme or idea in the story, the writer will begin from the analysis of the intrinsic features of the work, in which the characters, actions, and statements produce philosophical effects. It accords with the intrinsic feature of the works of art suggested by Rene Wellek and Austin Warren in their book entitled Theory of Literature: "The study of literature should firstly and foremost concentrate on the actual work of art itself" (1978 : 140).

There are some approaches applied in this paper, which are the explanation on some elements of fiction, namely theme and setting, the two aspects required as the central discussion. The

understanding on what is theme and setting, together with the explanation on the way to identify the theme in a story, together with the comprehension on the use and function of setting within a story by Edgar V. Roberts will help the writer to compose a satisfactory analysis. Certainly other aspects within the novel might be inserted as they cannot be neglected in formulating the theme such as characters, actions, and statements in the story.

Some related studies about setting in the novel are subsequently attached, as to gain a helpful and wide-ranging understanding on the subject discussed. In this way, we might figure out that Kingsley's setting creation is not merely applied for the merriment, accomplishment, and appeal of the novel, instead it bears the necessary values to reinforce the essential morals implied.

F. SCOPE AND LIMITATION

In this research the writer will reveal the necessary objects in the story to correlate with topic of analysis. Hence elaboration of supporting parts to uncover the theme will be the first step to conduct. Secondly, the evaluation on setting description in relation with theme and revelation of morals will be the next step to perform. Thus the limitation will go to the analysis on intrinsic

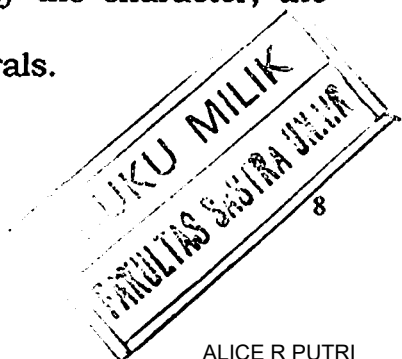
elements, which are mostly the characters, actions, statements, and setting.

G. METHOD OF THE STUDY

This analysis is necessarily conducting a library research. The related data and sources are taken from original writing, collection essays, encyclopedia, and critical studies, some of which are also collected from internet browsing. Quotations are needed here to ensure the theory, approaches, and the analysis itself.

The writer will apply a descriptive analytic method in this study, in which after reading the novel, describing the problems with the data related to the analysis, the writer will accumulate the sources which support the analysis. Afterwards, those that have been discussed will be employed to analyze the main problem concerning the use of setting in the story to underscore the theme and to reveal its morals.

The deductive method is applied in the analysis in order to give the first general knowledge of the story's idea. This theme formulation is subsequently explained by the supporting details, the elements of the intrinsic features, namely the character, the speeches, the actions, the setting, and the morals.



H. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Morals : the lessons to be learned from something that happens,
or from a story

Natural Setting : the out-door setting, namely the Nature, which
is one of the major forces governing the
circumstances of characters who
experience life (Roberts, 1989 : 229)

Manufactured Setting : the objects of value and convenience that
may generate all the forces among
characters (Roberts, 1989 : 230)